

December 17, 2013

Honorable Janice Brewer, Governor  
Arizona State Legislators - District 6, 7, and 8

Re: Cooperative Extension and College of Agriculture & Life Sciences FY2015 Budget Requests

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

The Gila County Board of Supervisors is informed that the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) has approved and forwarded to the Governor and the Legislature for approval, their FY2015 Budget request. This budget includes \$3.8 million to increase the UA Cooperative Extension's work in food and biosecurity and \$4.2 million to transform veterinary medical education in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The Gila County Board of Supervisors is supportive of these requests because of the programs they will provide for the citizens of our county. We are particularly supportive of the Cooperative Extension's request.

Because of the Cooperative Extension in Gila County: 1) Ranchers are better able to evaluate ecological processes and manage adaptively through participation in rangeland assessment and monitoring; 2) Beef cattle mineral nutrition supplements have been developed in concert with a major feed company consulting with UA scientist that match Arizona range conditions; 3) Each year 800 elementary age children in Gila County receive instruction and hands-on experiences in agriculture awareness and mining; 4) The San Carlos Apache community members are introduced to resources that increase literacy involvement in classrooms and at home; 5) Youth are gaining important life skills through 4-H and school enrichment activities in such areas as public speaking, record keeping, community service, and leadership; 6) Nutritional education is being provided to both adults and youth in Gila County and on the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation; and, 7) Initial outreach to wildland urban interface communities help facilitate fuel reduction activities on over 100,000 acres resulting in communities being far more prepared for wildfire today than a decade ago.

We are particularly pleased with Area Extension Agent, Animal Science & Gila County Cooperative Extension Director, Jim Sprinkle's leadership in Gila County. Approval of the budget as submitted is crucial to the continued success he and other leaders are having with programs like those mentioned above in our County.

Gila County currently assists the Cooperative Extension financially to ensure the continued high level of service we receive. We are informed that the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is considering reorganizing the county extension units around the state to a more regional approach. Any reorganization of the county extension units must not reduce the individual attention and effectiveness of the Extension in Gila County. We would appreciate receiving from your office some written assurance that the financial assistance we currently provide to the CE will stay in Gila County and support only programs provided in Gila County.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this letter of support for the Cooperative Extension's FY 2015 recommended budget because of the positive impact it has on the residents of Gila County.

Sincerely,

Michael Pastor, Chairman  
Gila County Board of Supervisors